

HYDROGEN CLUSTER COUNCIL (H_2CC)

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Abstract

The widespread use and acceptance of hydrogen is being advanced through the efforts of the "Hydrogen Cluster Council," or H_2CC . This group includes an expanding list of companies and communities that use the H_2CC as a forum to discuss common issues and develop solutions to promote the use of hydrogen. As hydrogen use grows throughout the country in localized "clusters," the H_2CC is being used as a forum to discuss issues between clusters and regions of the country.

Background

The rationale behind this program is the need to catalyze and assist regional efforts to establish and maintain hydrogen clusters that advance the use of hydrogen energy technologies. The H_2CC is organized around Regional Hydrogen Cluster Working Groups that are created in each local region that wishes to develop a Hydrogen Cluster. The structure of each regional group consists of stakeholders based regional needs and resources. This includes: industrial partners, local municipalities, local funding agencies, regional political and environmental interests.

The H_2CC consists of representation from Regional Hydrogen Cluster Working Groups relevant federal funding agencies (e.g. DOE, DOD, NASA, and DOT), the Hydrogen Technical Advisory Panel and Members at large, including Academia, Professional Organizations (NHA, etc.). It operates under the guidance of an executive committee whose members are currently Jay Keller, Peter Lehman, Susan Naughton, Bill Summers and George Thomas.

The objectives of the H₂CC are to facilitate a national effort to create an infrastructure for hydrogen energy utilization. This is being done by providing a mechanism to link regional efforts as part of a coordinated national effort to create a hydrogen energy infrastructure. A benefit of these activities is that then ensure that the Hydrogen Clusters activity receives exposure on a national scale.

The H₂CC meets twice a year - typically in the spring (near the NHA/HTAP spring meeting) and fall (near the HTAP meeting). Our current e-mail list is in excess of 200 and growing.

This Year's Activities

This year's fall meeting was held in December in conjunction with the HTAP meeting. The minutes of that meeting are posted on the NHA web site. In addition, to normal H₂CC business, a Cluster Implementation Subcommittee was commissioned to draft guidelines for potential sites to be identified as bona fide clusters. This subcommittee has met twice and will present draft guidelines to the membership at our spring meeting held in conjunction with the annual review (May 7, 1999).

There are also three new transportation demonstration activities in California creating new cluster activities: UC Davis, the City of Chula Vista (potential new H₂CC members), and Sunline Transit Authority (currently attending H₂CC meetings). These new activities along with those underway in Las Vegas form new clusters and that may in the future be defined as a new hydrogen cluster.

Future Work

We expect to develop a number of bona fide cluster activities nation-wide that will promote the development of a hydrogen infrastructure. It is crucial to note that the DOE is providing some support and leadership to this activities but cannot be expected to fund all of the activities necessary for the H₂CC to be successful. The DOE only acts as a catalyst for this work. The regional working groups are strongly encouraged to seek funding beyond the DOE to support the growth of the cluster. Many successful activities are emerging. Probably the most successful to date are the new transportation activities in California which are receiving most of their funds from a DOT earmark.

Figure 1. Location of hydrogen clusters (*) and potential hydrogen clusters (O).

